

L E T T E R

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

TRANSMITTING

In response to Senate resolution of December 10, 1888, information relative to obstructions in the Columbia River.

DECEMBER 18, 1888.—Referred to the Committee on Commerce and ordered to be printed.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington City, December 15, 1888.

The Secretary of War has the honor to transmit to the United States Senate a letter of the 13th instant from the Chief of Engineers, and its accompanying papers, which, it is believed, afford the information called for in Senate resolution of the 10th instant as to the action taken by the Board of Engineers appointed under the provisions of the river and harbor act of August 11, 1888, to examine the obstructions to navigation in the Columbia River at The Dalles and Celilo Falls and at Three and Ten Mile Rapids, and to report in regard thereto to Congress.

WILLIAM C. ENDICOTT,
Secretary of War.

The PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE OF
THE UNITED STATES SENATE.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF ENGINEERS,
UNITED STATES ARMY,
Washington, D. C., December 13, 1888.

SIR: I have the honor to return herewith the resolution of the Senate of December 10, 1888, desiring information as to what action has been taken in pursuance to a clause in the river and harbor act of August 11, 1888, authorizing and directing the Secretary of War to appoint a board of three engineers from the United States Army to examine the obstructions to navigation in the Columbia River at The Dalles and Celilo Falls and at Three and Ten Mile Rapids, and report thereon to Congress at the present session, and to state that the Board in question, having been duly constituted as required by orders of August 13, 1888, met at Portland, Oregon, August 21 last, and, as will appear from a communication herewith submitted from Col. G. H. Mendell, Corps of Engineers, president of the Board, is now engaged in the consideration

of projects of various kinds for overcoming the obstructions referred to, and is expected to submit an additional preliminary report within a few days upon this important engineering question.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

THOS. LINCOLN CASEY,
Brig. Gen., Chief of Engineers.

Hon. WILLIAM C. ENDICOTT,
Secretary of War.

COMMUNICATION OF THE PRESIDENT OF BOARD OF ENGINEERS.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *December 12, 1888.*

GENERAL: In reply to reference on December 11 of the resolution of the Senate of the United States of December 10 (herewith returned) directing the Secretary of War to inform the Senate what action has been taken in pursuance of a clause in the river and harbor act of August 11, 1888, respecting the appointment of a Board of Engineers from the United States Army to examine the obstructions to navigation in the Columbia River at The Dalles and Celilo Falls and at Three and Ten Mile Rapids, etc., I beg to state that the Board of Engineers provided for by river and harbor act of August 11, 1888, and constituted by Special Orders, No. 58, Headquarters Corps of Engineers, current series, met in Portland, Oregon, on August 21, and subsequently examined the obstructions at and near The Dalles.

Studies of projects for overcoming these obstructions by boat railway, by canal and locks, and by portage railway were then undertaken and prosecuted with all possible diligence. The results are now before the Board and under consideration, which has been delayed by the absence of one of the members of the Board, made necessary by the fact that he was also a member of the court of inquiry in the matter of the Washington Aqueduct.

A preliminary report was submitted on August 28, a copy of which is herewith.

In view of the late date upon which the river and harbor act became a law, it has been impossible to submit such a report as the importance and comprehensive character of the subject requires in the brief time designated in the act of August 11, 1888.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

G. H. MENDELL,
Colonel Corps of Engineers,
President of Board.

The CHIEF OF ENGINEERS, U. S. ARMY.

PRELIMINARY REPORT OF BOARD OF ENGINEERS.

UNITED STATES ENGINEER OFFICE,
Portland, Oregon, August 28, 1888.

SIR: The Board of Engineers, constituted by your instructions of August 13, 1888, to consider and report upon the means of overcoming the obstructions to the navigation of the Columbia River at and between The Dalles and Celilo Falls, met at Portland August 21, all the members being present.

A careful examination of the localities was made on August 23 by the Board, accompanied by the following-named officers of the Corps of Engineers: Maj. W. A. Jones, Maj. Thomas H. Handbury, Capt. W. Young, and Lieut. Edward Burr, all of whom have been, or are now, connected with the improvement of the Columbia River.

Written invitations were sent to prominent citizens to present their views, in person or in writing, on the subject before the Board, and after due advertisement, public sessions were held in Portland on August 27 and 28, at which all persons interested were requested to attend. A number were present. A stenographic record was kept.

After study of the maps and papers arrangements were made for the preparation of detailed estimates of the cost of the several methods proposed for the desired improvement, upon the completion of which a report will be submitted.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

G. H. MENDELL,
Colonel Corps of Engineers, U. S. A.,
President of the Board.

The CHIEF OF ENGINEERS, U. S. A.



